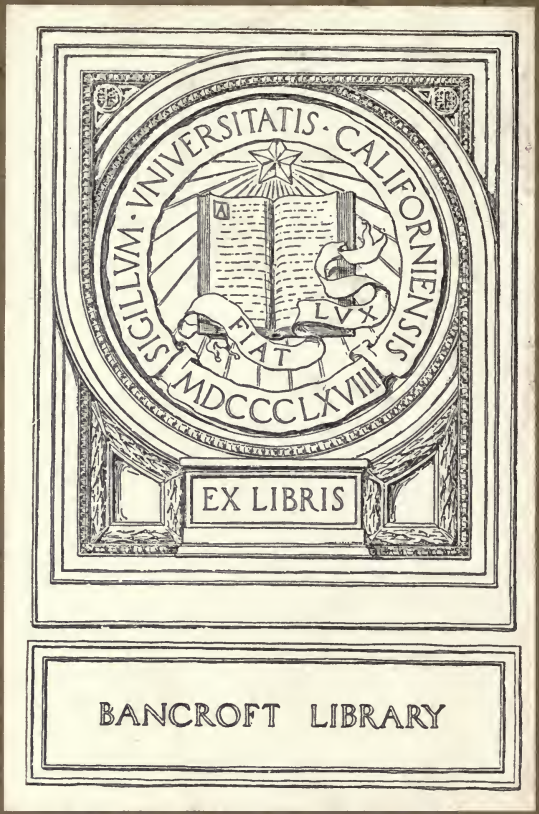


BANCROFT LIBRARY

ACPOST LIBRARY

WISDOM

for the

WISE

By

LORENZO SOSSO

Souvenir Edition

Illustrated with 20 Beautiful Views of
San Francisco after the Fire

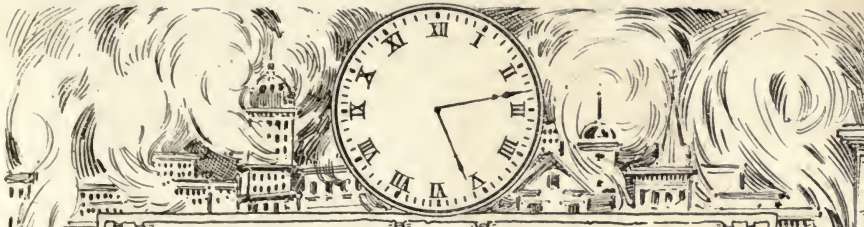
SAN FRANCISCO
179 Dekaney Ave.
1904

All views in this book expressly photographed and herein reproduced with the kind permission of

JAMES STODDARD, Photographer,

835 Octavia Street,

San Francisco, Cal.



Wisdom for the Wise

A BOOK

OF

PROVERBS IN RHYME

By

Lorenzo Sosso

Author of

PROVERBS OF THE PEOPLE

Souvenir Edition

SAN FRANCISCO
179 De Long Ave.
1906

F855
.2
.S54

Copyright
By Lorenzo Sosso
1906

43560
Bancroft Library

TAYLOR COL. AUG. 1940

Dedicated to
The People of Greater San Francisco

With faith in their future
With hope in their courage
And with charity to all

After St. Francis they named thee, my City,
Golden the poppies which bloom in thy hair;
Could not the Fates in their infinite pity,
Seeing thy glory and loveliness, spare?
Stone upon stone have they rent the foundation
Whence thou hadst built thee a throne of delight,
Filling thy heart with a sad desolation,
Earthquake and fire the arms of their might.

Yet, although mightily fallen and stricken,
Fortitude parried the thrust of the gods;
Out of the ashes thy life will requicken,
Courage loves fighting 'gainst terrible odds.
Give to thy sons of that magical potion
Giving thy Argonaut children of yore
The brawn of the hills and the salt of the ocean,
The talons to pounce and the pinions to soar.

Then like a dream in our strength will we build thee
Fairer and greater than ever of old;
Filling thy homes, as the Pioneers filled thee,
With Womanhood fair and with Manhood as bold.
With ships from all seas still afloat in thy haven,
With all of the wealth of the world at thy gate,
He is less than a coward and worse than a craven
Who has not the courage to combat with fate.

Generous, gracious the world ever found the,
Far, far more eager to give than receive;
And when the swift hand of destruction discrowned thee
With weeping compassion the world came to grieve.
Yet sunsets still halo thy hills with their splendor,
Ocean still lavishes gems at thy feet,
The beautiful valleys around thee surrender
Their bountiful treasures of vine and of wheat.

O I am proud of thee, glad too, my City,
Glad of the poppies which bloom in thy hair;
Drink from the cup of the world's love and pity
So it may strengthen thy spirit to bear.
Then will thy people again repossess thee
Lovelier yet than of old they possessed;
And all of thy sisters in wonder confess thee
The beautiful City, the Queen of the West!

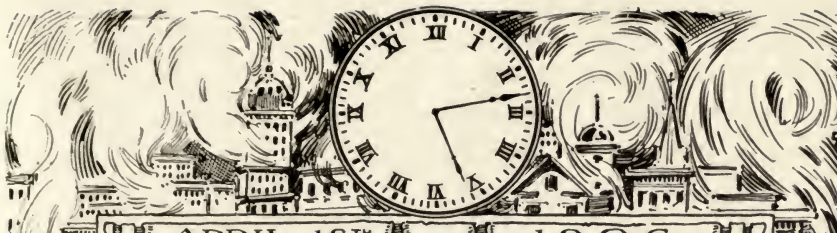
PREFACE

Wisdom for the Wise---who need it
More than the babes to whom we feed it.

Though not a native, I have been a resident of San Francisco for more than thirty years continuously. Everything which makes the habitation of man dear to his heart abides for me within its precincts, and I have never dreamed of a home away from the circle of its beautiful hills and the glorious bay which surrounds it. With the selfish fondness of a father for his only child, I have watched it grow in splendor and in wealth, and exulted at the strange fascination it exercised over the hearts of men from all lands. I have watched the ships sailing and steaming in through the Golden Gate, and they seemed like doves of peace bringing messages of good-will from all the world. In the still night, when the scream of the engine's whistle would reach my ears, I would often reflect upon the fact that though dwelling in a city whose boundaries were almost at the verge of our great nation's territory, yet we were linked to it by bands of steel, and Plymouth Rock did not seem so far from Shag Rock, nor Bedloe's Island from Alcatraz.

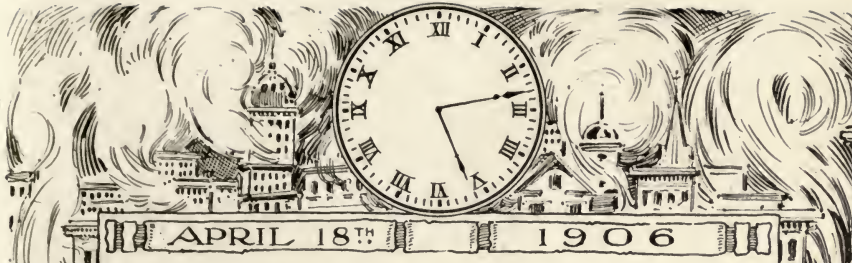
And I shall never falter in my faith in her glorious future, nor ever disclaim the sentiments expressed in the poem herein

reprinted from "Sunset Magazine." This little book is issued with no intention of boasting of these things, but with the modest desire of adding my mite of good-will to the people at large, the people of dear San Francisco, women, children and men, many of whom have suffered the saddest of deprivations, the loss of home and kindred, but whose spirit is undaunted and who are more than ever resolute and courageous; yes, nobler and greater than ever.



List of Illustrations

1. California Pioneers' Building.
2. Old Mission Dolores.
3. City Hall.
4. West Side of City Hall.
5. Observatory Golden Gate Park.
6. Nob Hill, Looking Southeast.
7. Chinatown.
8. Mission Street Wharf.
9. From Pine and Stockton.
10. New-Post Office, Mission Street Side.
11. Looking up O'Farrell Street.
12. Cattle Killed by Earthquake.
13. Masonic Temple. Synagogue Adjoining.
14. Music Stand, Golden Gate Park.
15. Museum, Golden Gate Park.
16. Van Ness Ave. at Vallejo Street.
17. View of the Mission.
18. Dynamiting after the Fire.
19. Pine Street from Montgomery.
20. A Row of Modern Kitchens.



Wisdom for the Wise

The greater man's pomposity,
The less his generosity.

The mantle of morality
May cover deep rascality.

The rainbows of existence
Are always in the distance.

All men are dreamers---but a fraction
Fulfill the dreams of men with action.

There's little of divinity
In modern femininity.

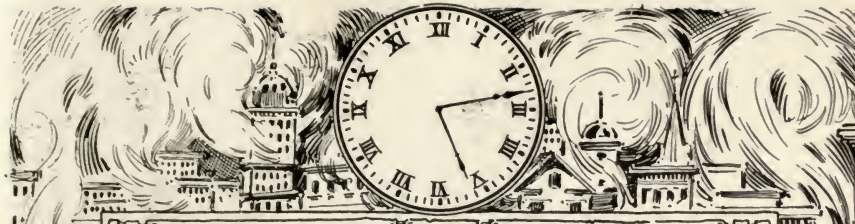
Character, not features,
Distinguishes God's creatures.

Dismiss not with impunity
The god of opportunity.

The cap for all humanity
Of universal fit is -- vanity.

Tested in Mammon's crucible
To what is Love reducible!

Many a costly jewel
Has Folly used for fuel.



To trust to intuition
Is reason's superstition.

To trust to an illusion
Is reason in confusion.

Love whose affection ranges
Is soon a love which changes.

Nothing in life's more hateful
Than friendship turned ungrateful.

Better equivocating
Than quarreling in debating.

The spirit of negation
Is not renunciation.

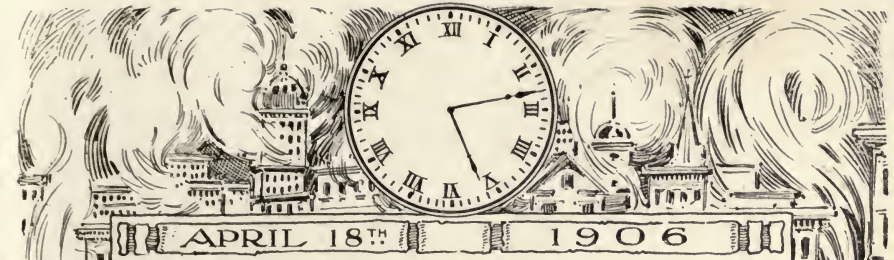
He buys his life too dearly
Who takes it too severely.

There is no heavier fetter
Than that which binds a debtor.

It is not only foxes
Who deal in paradoxes.

Sometimes an ounce of knowledge
Is worth a pound of college.

VEST SIDE OF CITY HALL.



The beauty of a building
Is not alone its gilding.

If Poverty could make men cheerful
Prosperity would feel less fearful.

We still hold fate accountable
For what proves unsurmountable.

They preach of life's amenities
Who profit by its lenities.

The beauty of a sermon
Is not in stole or ermine.

Kings dignify their station
But not their occupation.

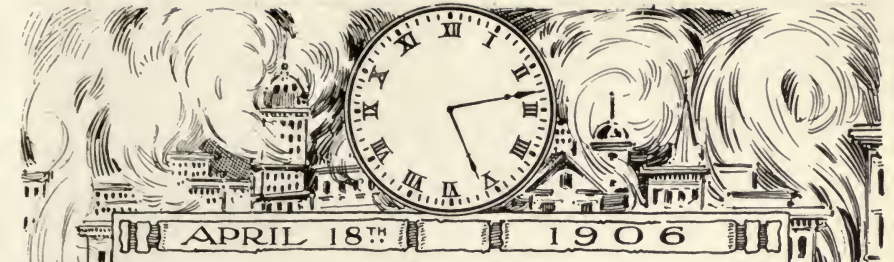
Mankind should never lengthen
The arm it helps to strengthen.

Persuasion will not wheedle
The eye-whole from a needle.

Men in opinion vary
But women are contrary.

The followers of Hypocricy
Can form no aristocracy.

OBSERVATORY G.G. PARK.
STODDARD PHOTO.



Absence oft makes us wander
Instead of growing fonder.

What is the world's derision
To him who hath the vision?

This marrying for money
May not be quite so funny.

In law too little brevity,
In love too much of levity.

Many a saint's reflection
Would never bear inspection.

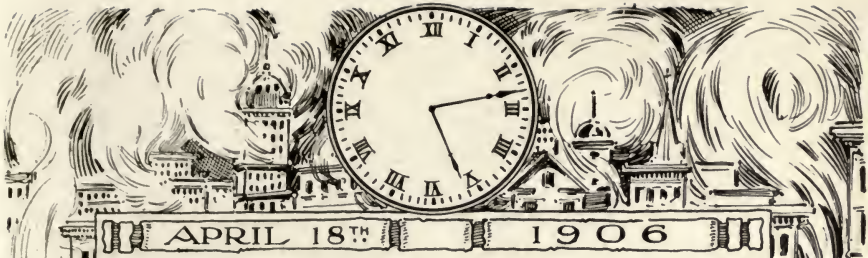
Deceit still wears upon her
The mantle of dishonor.

Some men require no schooling
To learn the art of fooling.

The wisdom that forestalleth
Is oft the first that falleth.

'Tis only his reverses
The speculator curses.

Better poor independence
Than royalty's resplendence.



Why men are not more sensible
Is still incomprehensible.

A little of timidity
Should temper intrepidity.

There is too much disparity
Between good-will and charity.

'Tis not in haunted houses
The devil most carouses.

The virtue of society
Is certainly not piety.

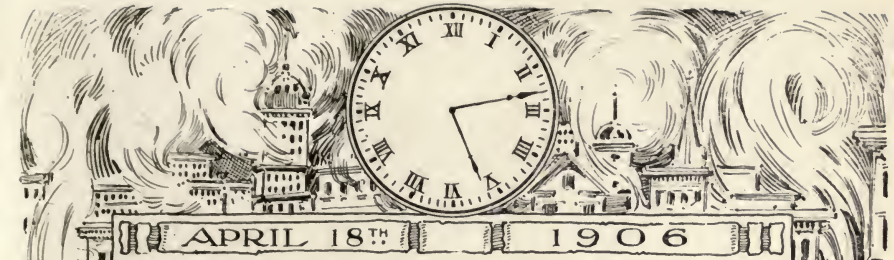
It is not virtue singly
Can make man's nature kingly.

If you're a hero, for example,
Don't prove it by the worms you trample.

Men martyr truth for its conviction
And yet crown folly for its fiction.

Too much of wealth, too little merit
The children of the rich inherit.

How lovingly some people handle
The tainted morsel of a scandal.



It is the eagle's pinions
Which give it wide dominions.

The love between the sexes
The devil still perplexes.

'Tis folly to importune
For all the gifts of Fortune.

To call a goose a gander
Is but perverting slander.

The virtue of gentility
Is its respectability.

Some sinners would adventure
To sign a saint's indenture.

Who ever woman courted
Has often truth distorted.

'Tis but a poor repentance
Which follows after sentence.

Because a sword is pliable
Proves not 'tis unreliable.

An amity convivial
Is generally trivial.

APRIL 18TH 1906

They only who have loved or hated
Know the full meaning of mismated.

'Tis strange with what asperity
We entertain sincerity.

When Love grows too observant
It ceases to be fervent.

Too many maidens think of marriage
As of a journey in a carriage.

However great, however little,
All gods made out of clay are brittle.

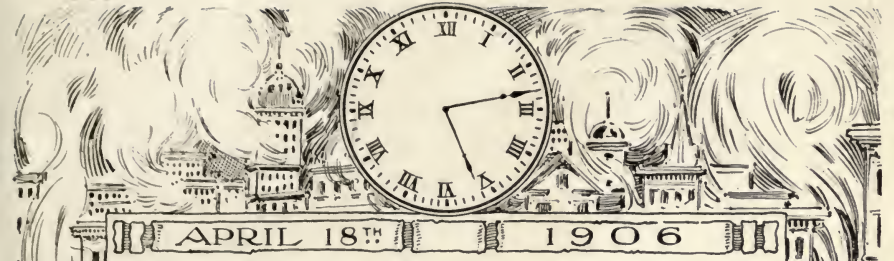
The gift of prophesying
Is but the gab of lying.

A modicum of suavity
Can gild even depravity.

When folly is commended
What fool can feel offended?

The noblest life---the life of labor;
The noblest love---the love of neighbor.

A dole of thanks, though but a pittance,
Assists in gratitude's acquittance.



Defeat becomes a noble master
When teaching us to shun disaster.

Not truthfulness but lying
Needs ever fortifying.

God loves hilarity
Free from vulgarity.

The road of the friendless
Is lonely and endless.

Man's faith in his futurity
Is a bond without security.

They who spend life in dancing
Are seldom found advancing.

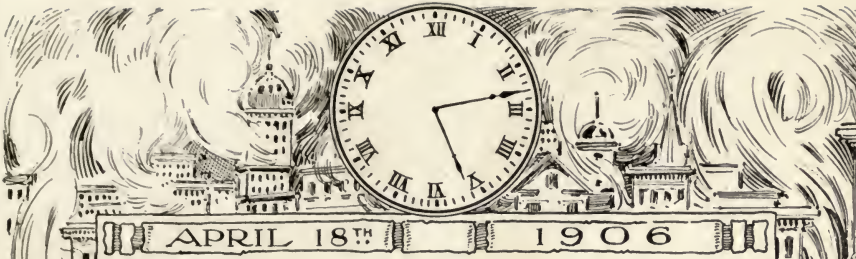
Reforms are most affected
Where schools are most erected.

Sometimes it proves expensive
To be too apprehensive.

Friendship which hath two edges
Is prone to cut its pledges.

Who walks the road of splendor
Must not have feet too tender.

COR 4TH AND MISSION



Love in its season
Is love without reason.

It is the wise man's folly
Which make fools melancholy.

There's poison in the chalice
Touched by the lips of malice.

The more incredible the fiction
The greater grows a fool's conviction.

The great more than the humble
Are still more apt to stumble.

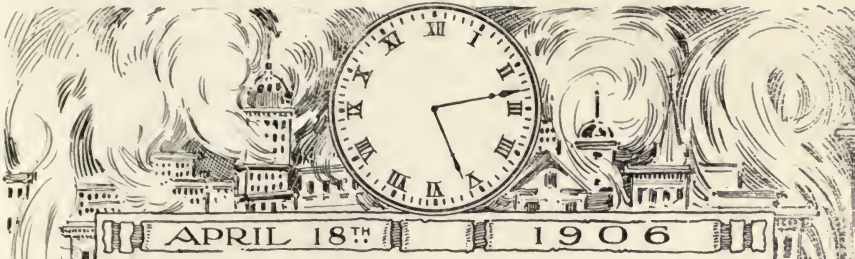
Both cowardice and cunning
Are very apt at running.

The devil surely gets his portion
Without resorting to extortion.

There's many things more edifying
Than man's precocity in lying.

What lapidary would demolish
A precious stone for lack of polish?

When some dead lie is resurrected
The liar is the most affected.



Credulity still fosters
Society's impostors.

Some women seem adorable
Whose morals are deplorable.

The road to Fruit Forbidden
Is woefully overriden.

That mountains are removeable
Must still remain unproveable.

How many world-exalted
Have from their fame defaulted.

Think not the poet erratic
For dwelling in an attic.

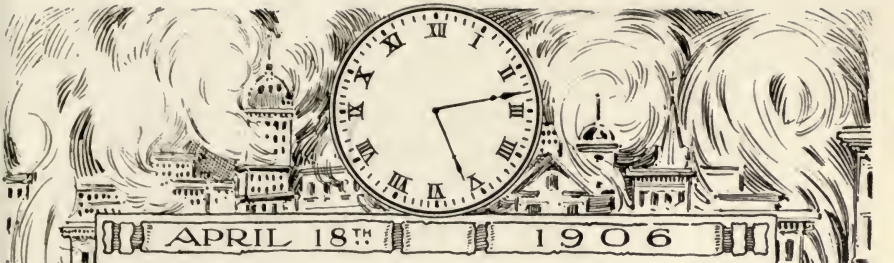
The fearlessness of many an action
Springs from man's fealty to faction.

Not always every deed that's glorious
Is morally as meritorious.

Better to speak a platitude
Than not express thy gratitude.

It would be folly for the rabbit
To mask itself in lion's habit.

ON MISSION ST. BY EARTHQUAKE



If only given the occasion
A sinner does not need persuasion.

To misconstrue veracity
Is deemed in law sagacity.

Linked to a virtue that is vicious
E'en love itself grows meritricious.

Who sip the cup of pleasure
Wail not at overmeasure.

Not all the Lord's anointed
Are chosen or appointed.

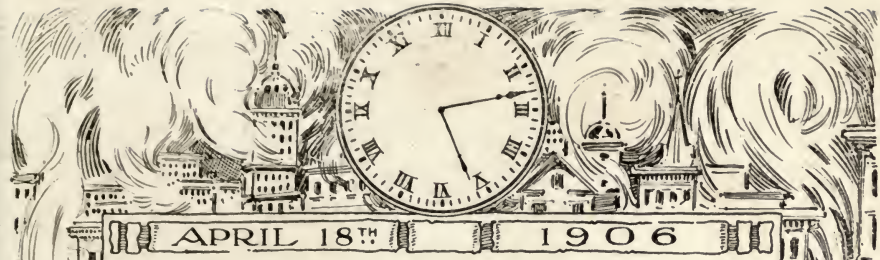
The fox can with facility
Assume the garb humility,

Ignorance misguided
Should never be derided.

The art which makes demeanor gracious
Oft makes the character mendacious.

One easily can sever
Performance from endeavor.

The weathercock upon the steeple
Is not the pastor of the people.



The spirit of conformity
May breed some strange enormity.

A pigmy dwelling with the giants
Is apt to boast of self-reliance.

The spirit dutiful
Is also beautiful.

The virtues of a woman
Proclaim her truly human.

What's worth the cost of gaining
Is also worth retaining.

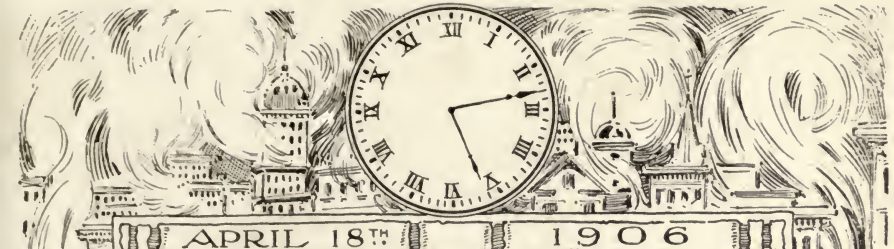
Some men presume to greatness
With too austere sedateness.

Base is he who despises
The means by which he rises.

The heights had best be counted
After they are surmounted.

God's precepts only mattered
Until fair Eve was flattered.

To charge self-love with blindness
Is justice but unkindness.



The virtues that we nourish
Are those most apt to flourish.

The merchant thinks commendable
Whatever goods are vendible.

No sin will need acquittal
Which never knew committal.

It would be detrimental
To the tiger to be gentle.

Who speaketh with authority
Still speaks with the minority.

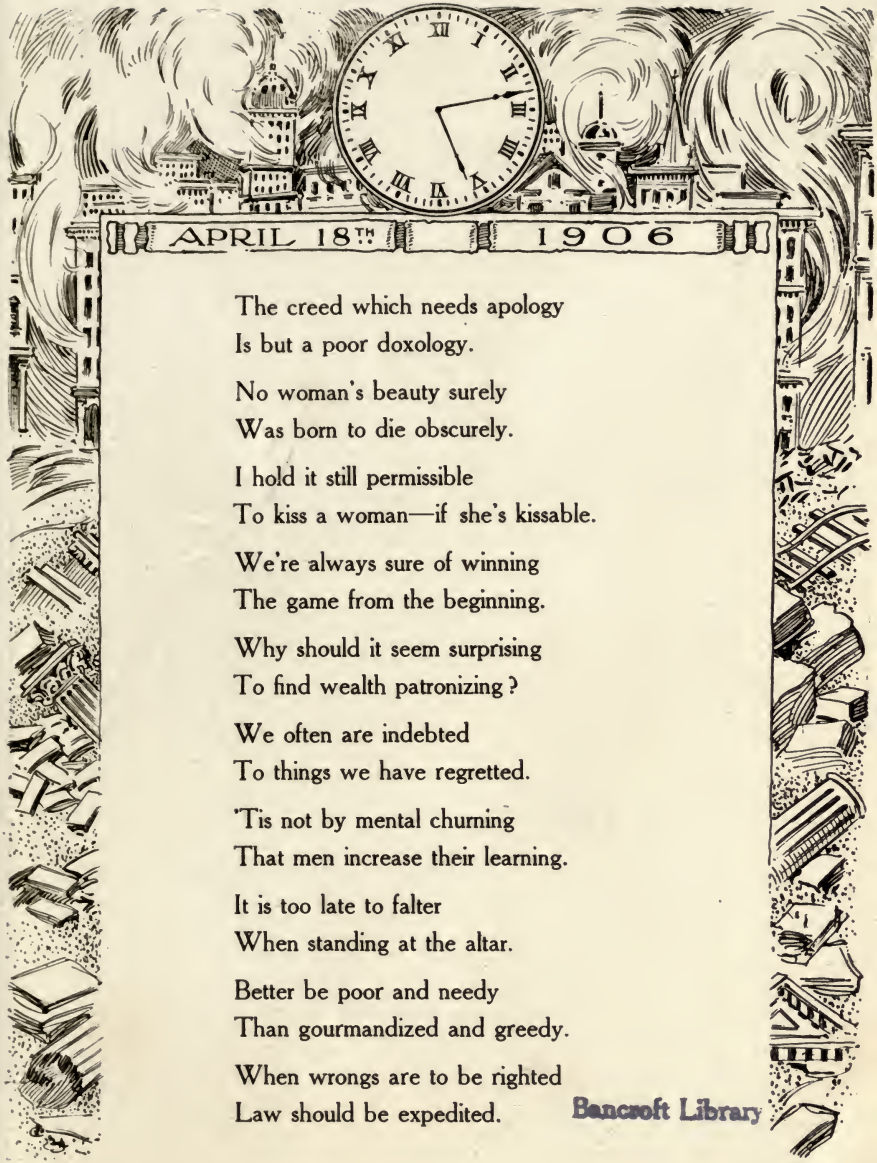
'Tis nothing new or novel
To find a genius in a hovel.

The jackass still rejoices
To hear his brethren's voices.

What profits it to experiment
Upon the cause of merriment?

A better life of laughter
May better life hereafter.

To delicately cast aspersion
Is smart society's diversion.



The creed which needs apology
Is but a poor doxology.

No woman's beauty surely
Was born to die obscurely.

I hold it still permissible
To kiss a woman—if she's kissable.

We're always sure of winning
The game from the beginning.

Why should it seem surprising
To find wealth patronizing?

We often are indebted
To things we have regretted.

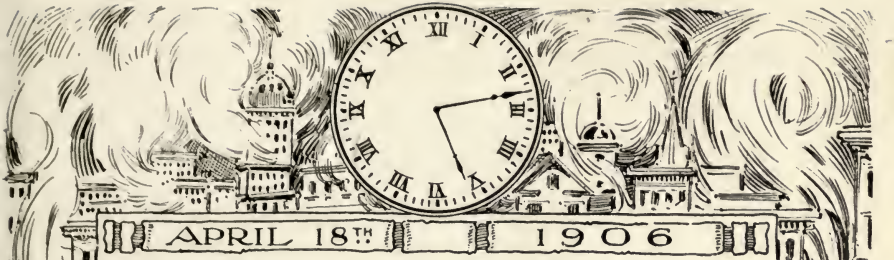
'Tis not by mental churning
That men increase their learning.

It is too late to falter
When standing at the altar.

Better be poor and needy
Than gourmandized and greedy.

When wrongs are to be righted
Law should be expedited.

Bancroft Library



Men rich in wealth and station
Are always preaching toleration.

The foolish are contented
When by a fool they're represented.

Who stirs a pot to make it bubble
May get a scalding for his trouble.

There is dishonor in detraction
Spoken by either man or faction.

A woman's tongue can raise more clamor
Than even Vulcan with his hammer.

The virtue which must be commended
May be from vice itself descended.

Not those who build a church or buy it
Can absolutely sanctify it.

The devil's virtuous intention
Is but a pin-point in dimension.

An oath is not an act of daring;
There's truer virtue in forbearing.

San Francisco

Reprinted by kind permission of the Editor, from "Sunset Magazine,"
December 1904

I stood upon a verdant height
Above the sand dunes bleak and gray
What time the watchman of the night
Salutes the herald of the day---
The twilight of the dawn---the stars
Yet lingering in the skies were few ;
My spirit through its prison-bars
Looked out with rapture at the view.

Like some red chief I saw the sun
His arrows tipped with fire, arise,
'Till night's pale warriors, one by one,
Lay slain along the crimsoned skies.
I saw Presidio's barracks stirred,
The soldiers going to and fro ;
And from afar, though faint, I heard
The bugles their reveille blow.

O San Francisco! how my heart
Exulted, when I heard beyond
The hills that hold thy Gate apart
Those ringing bugle notes respond.
Gorgeous with bannered gold the clouds
Moved through the passes of the sky ;
No sea of faces swayed in crowds
To watch those silent troops go by.

No rumor reached me of the din
Where commerce and where traffic meet;
No vista of the scarlet sin
Rustling its garments through the street.
Only the bell-buoys muffled dirge,
The wheeling sea-gulls overheard;
And those scarred cliffs on which the surge
Mourns its deep requiem for the dead.

Fair those great cities ringed with foam---
But fairer than them all to me
This city of my heart and home,
A greater Athens yet to be.
Wardress of all the ships which sail
Her tributary seas afar,
What alien power can prevail
Her glory and her grace to mar?

And mighty ships shall anchor yon
From all the lands of far away,
Flaunting bright pennants to the sun,
Making a forest of her bay.
And as her beauty shall increase,
Singing the magic of her name,
Her port will be the port of peace,
Her crown, a crown of song and fame!

PINE ST
ON MONTGOMERY

GB 3212724